

to death, or may become a chronic nephritis. Complete cures appear to be rare.

In closing, Dr. Strümpel calls attention to an interesting group of diseases in whose cause the excessive use of alcoholic drinks plays a large part, even if one still little understood. In addition to the numerous arresting, poisonous actions which destroy the organic cells, there belong also certain influences upon the course of the general process of metabolism, — gout, diabetes mellitus, and obesity.

Strümpel thinks physicians have it in their power to prevent untold misery and save many lives, if they take hold and work earnestly in this cause. The family physician should specially take care to forbid giving alcoholic drinks to children. It is incredible what folly is committed in allowing children such drinks. Strümpel had a child of five years brought to him with alcoholic polyneuritis, who had received a quart of beer daily! — *Hygienic Gazette*.

ERGOT IN THE TREATMENT OF PERIODIC NEURALGIAS.

Dr. William H. Thomson read a paper on this subject, in which he gave the histories of a number of cases of severe periodic neuralgias in which the symptoms were promptly relieved by the use of ergot in large doses. In all of these cases the disease was of long standing, and the usual remedies had been employed, without avail. Dr. Thomson said his method of administering the ergot in migraine was as follows: The fluid extract of the drug is employed, combined with an equal quantity of elixir of cinchona, to obviate its tendency to cause nausea. Two drachms of this mixture is to be taken in water as soon as the premonitory symptoms of the headache are noticed, and the patient is advised to lie down and keep very quiet. If, after an hour, the headache continues, a second similar dose is taken, and then a third in another hour if necessary. As nausea is such a general accompaniment of this affection, it is provided that if either of the doses be vomited, it should then be taken in an enema of two ounces of water. This medication, the speaker said, rarely fails to arrest the attacks, even in long-standing cases, and with a preventative course of intestinal antiseptics in the intervals, the relief from the malady has often proved permanent.

The following is the history of one of the cases reported by Dr. Thomson. The patient was a young man who suffered from headaches beginning at the occiput and extending to the temples; they generally came on about 11 a.m. daily, and gradually grew worse until they reached their acme about 4 o'clock in the afternoon, after which they subsided, without, however, entirely disappearing.

His physician failed to check their increasing severity, although on one occasion he administered thirty-grain doses of chloral with thirty grains of potassium bromide every two hours for two doses, with little more effect than a slight drowsiness being produced. The next day, the patient becoming maniacal from the pain, sixty-five grains of chloral, sixty of bromide, and thirty of antiyprin were given within two hours. This caused a profuse sweating and moderate sleep. The third day a consultant was called, who recommended that quinine and Warburg's tincture (which had been tried at the beginning of the treatment) should be resumed in large doses. Accordingly, sixty grains of quinine and two ounces of Warburg's tincture were given in twenty-four hours, with even worse afternoon paroxysms of pain than before. The next day the bromide, antipyryn and chloral were resumed, but no great relief was obtained. At this time he was seen by Dr. Thomson, who recommended drachm doses of fluid extract of ergot every hour for three doses, combining the first two doses with ten grains of quinine, and if the stomach rejected either of the doses, that the medicine be given per rectum. Soon after taking the first dose, the patient experienced a good deal of relief; the second dose was vomited, whereupon it was given per rectum, this was soon followed by a complete subsidence of the pain, with profuse perspiration. This medication was repeated for three successive days, with final cure of the headaches. The second ten grains of quinine produced decided symptoms of cinchonism.

Dr. Joseph Collins said that he has recently had occasion to try ergot in several cases. In one case the patient had been given huge doses of Warburg's tincture, quinine, bromide and potassium iodide without any benefit. He was then given ergot, and a marvellous improvement at once followed. This was three months ago, and the man has had no return of the symptoms since. In another case the patient was a lady, aged forty years, who had long been under treatment for migraine, the pain being of a boring character and very difficult to relieve. In this case the value of ergot in the treatment of this affection was discovered accidentally; it was given to check a menorrhagia, and at the same time it relieved the headaches.

Dr. Thomson, in reply to a question, said our present knowledge is not definite enough to form any idea as to how ergot acts in these cases. He simply gave it as an empirical remedy. Furthermore, his paper refers entirely to neuralgias that are definitely periodical. These are usually very severe, and entirely different from the ordinary intermittent headaches. He referred to the fact that quinine even in small doses, when it is combined with ergot, appears to produce cinchonism much